

AFS 101, Fall 2008, 2 credits
Introduction to Agricultural and Food Systems

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Office hours: Please contact an instructor to make an appointment.

Course overview: Students will be introduced to the basic components and terminology associated with the agricultural systems used to produce and deliver food to people around the globe. Advances in scientific research and technology have led to dramatic improvements in our ability to produce food and feed; however, perceived risks associated with many of these advancements now threaten food and environmental safety. In order to serve as future leaders and change agents in agriculture, as well as to act as informed citizens, students must gain an awareness of and appreciation for the diverse array of perspectives surrounding current issues in crop and food production. Students will explore the scientific and ethical bases of issues associated with agricultural and food systems including targeted crop and food production, land use and sustainability, environmental safety, human capital inputs and marketing issues. Activities are designed to support students with engaging in productive discussions about different perspectives of issues related to crop and food production.

Prerequisite: A willingness to learn, share your ideas and listen to others.

Class Time and Location: Monday 12:10 to 1 pm, Hulbert 27
Wednesday 12:10 to 3 pm, Hulbert 27

Text and Assigned Readings:

1. Who Moved my Cheese, Spencer Johnson, 2000. Putnam. (available at Crimson & Gray, Bookie, and on-line at www.prenhall.com);
2. Assigned readings will be distributed in class prior to each topic presentation.

Course handouts, assignments and assigned readings will be accessible through the following website: <http://www.afs.wsu.edu/afs101/>

Course Objectives

1. Expand student's comprehensive understanding of various aspects of agricultural and food systems, while supporting them in acquiring a balanced perspective of relevant issues;
2. Expose students to the diverse array of disciplines associated with, as well as the complexity of, crop and food production systems;
3. Support students with engaging in collaborative and collegial discussions that evolve or expand their knowledge-base and understanding of agricultural and food system issues;

4. Encourage students to continue to explore career opportunities in disciplines related to crop and food production.

Student Learning Outcomes, Knowledge and Skill Development

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Use discipline specific definitions and terminology to explain integrated agricultural and food systems;
2. Identify the key components that comprise an agricultural or food system;
3. Discuss the integration of various disciplines associated with agricultural and food systems;
4. Assess, value and discuss varying perspectives on issues related to agricultural and food systems;
5. Understand the human elements and interpersonal skills required to problem-solve and create consensus around difficult issues associated with crop and food production.

This course fulfills four of the six learning goals of the baccalaureate as outlined by university (<https://my.wsu.edu/portal/>) including: Critical and Creative Thinking, Information Literacy, Communication, and Self in Society

Course Description: AFS 101 is designed to heighten the exposure of students to a diverse array of issues associated with agricultural and food production systems. A lecture/discussion format is used throughout the course.

On Wednesdays, an expert in a given topic area will present a 50 to 75 minute lecture, which will be followed by an open discussion that students are expected to participate in. Students will come to each presentation with two, typed copies of four prepared questions on the topic of the week in hand. One copy will be handed in, whereas the second copy will be used by students as a guiding tool for engaging in discussion with the presenter.

On the following Monday, students will hand in a 1 to 2 page retrospective essay on the presentation from the previous week (see assignment guidelines), and the experience will be debriefed. One support article for each topic will be distributed on the Monday prior to the presentation to help students prepare for discussion. Students are expected to read the article before coming to the presentation on Wednesday.

The following week a second speaker will present a different perspective of that same topic area in order to expose students to a diverse array of view points that surround many agricultural and food production issues.

The time spent in discussion with the presenter is intended to allow students to explore various aspects of the topic that may not have been presented during the lecture. Your involvement in the discussion is highly likely to influence how well you prepare your retrospective essay on the topic. Please use this time to identify and explore key elements of agricultural and food production systems with the presenter and your classmates. These discussions will support students with identifying important issues in agriculture, while developing the skills required to work with others to solve problems related to crop and food production. You will have five days after this discussion to collect your thoughts, assess the information presented or gather additional information, and write your essay on the topic. **Essays are due at the beginning of the period on Monday following each presentation.**

Expectations, Evaluation and Grading

Mutual respect and effort are essential components of success in this course and will be expected of everyone at all times. Attendance is essential for learning and development, and therefore is mandatory. Students are expected to complete assignments and readings before class begins on the date that they are due. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments should be typed. Students must demonstrate an understanding of terminology, methodologies and issues associated with agricultural and food production systems to successfully complete the course requirements.

Assignment Distribution and Due Dates:

- Assigned readings for Wednesday's presentation will be distributed on the Monday before the presentation (or earlier if available).
- Four questions (at least two from the assigned reading) are due at the beginning of class each Wednesday before the presentation begins.
- Retrospective essays for each presentation made on Wednesday are due at the beginning of class the following Monday.

Late Penalties: All essays or question lists are due at the beginning of class on the due date, without exception. Assignments that are turned in late will be penalized using the following point loss scale:

- Assignments handed in any time other than at the beginning of the class on the due date will receive a 14% penalty.
- For each day past the due date, late assignments will be penalized 14% per day.

Graded Components of the Course:

Presentation Questions (11 sets of questions @ 5 pts per set)	55
Retrospective Assessment Essays (11 essays @ 50 points each)	550
Final Exam/Essay	100
Total Points:	705

Grading Scale:

A 94-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F <60
A- 90-93	B 84-86	C 74-76	D 60-66	
	B- 80-83	C - 70-73		

Disability Accommodations: Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. Please notify the instructor during the first week of class of any accommodations needed for the course. Late notification may mean that requested accommodations might not be available. All accommodations must be approved through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) located in the Administration Annex Room 205, 335-1566. We also recognize that each student has strengths and weaknesses. If you have difficulty learning the material or doing the assignments/exams but don't have a documented disability, please see an instructor for accommodations.

Plagiarism: Please see the university's policy on this subject at: www.conduct.wsu.edu/plagiarism/main.html and www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/plagiarism/main.html

WSU Safety: Please see oem.wsu.edu/emergencies and alert.wsu.edu

Learning management systems and campus resources: ctlit.wsu.edu, WSU Writing Center, <http://www.writingprogram.wsu.edu/units/writingcenter/>